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Editorial

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## Editorial

With the publication of the Lingfield Interim Report *Professionalism in Further Education* in March 2012, the Further Education Teacher Training (FETT) world has been thrown into disarray. This report (with the final report expected in early July, 2012) recommends that the regulations of 2007 (*The Further Education Teachers' Continuing Professional Development and Registration, England, Regulations, No. 2116* and *The Further Education Teachers' Qualifications, England, Regulations, No. 2264*) are dismantled, including the requirement (whether by regulation or contract for those receiving public funding) for teachers in the sector to be teacher trained and qualified. The essential philosophy of this report, which also reflects that of the present day government, lies in the following quotation:

*In all these matters we emphasize our core belief that staff training, professional updating, competency and behaviour are essentially matters between employer and employee.* (p.6)

This is despite their criticism of the lack of support from Further Education employers for staff training and Continuing Professional Development (p.14). There is little, if any, evidence-base to this report and along with factual errors, leads one to the conclusion that it lacks rigour and is not independent. This is in almost complete contrast to the other DBIS report, *Evaluation of FE Teachers' Qualifications (England) Regulations 2007 (2012)* - published the day after the Lingfield report - which is more substantive, evidence-based and interviewed 229 individuals (compared to Lingfield's 29 witnesses). Despite these attacks on the professional standing of teachers in the sector, I am sure that Teacher Educators and practitioners will continue to promote the tenets of professionalism in the sector.

Although the four papers we have are very different in their content, they all contribute to the on-going discussions around FETT or the sector, directly or indirectly. Crawley's paper on the present scenario of FETT highlights and analyses the major challenges facing of FETT and argues that much of the progress and developments over the last 10 years could be lost, particularly in relationship to the expertise and commitment of Higher Education Institutions and their Teacher Educators, and calls on Teacher Educators to make sure they are in the forefront of designing the future. Cushing's paper gives an account of one pre-service trainee's PGCE experience with close reference to various aspects of professionalism within the sector; Grayling et al argue for the importance and positioning of 'thinking skills' within the Further Education curriculum and its relationship to vocational pedagogy and teacher training; and, finally, as a contrast to research focused on contemporary issues in the sector, Walker's research provides a general history of the mechanics' institute as an Adult Education movement and its contribution to what became state-funded further education towards the end of the nineteenth century.

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